

Acronym of the Month

If there is a more dedicated reader of Acronym of the Month that Patt (the second "t" is silent) Comstock from Transit Route Facilities, the editors of DOT Dispatch have yet to find him or her. Mr. Comstock has been among the first to contribute answers every month since AOTM first saw print, and sent in no fewer than three answers this time before settling on the correct one. The acronym, SUE, stands for "Subsurface Utility." While submitting the correct answer, Mr. Comstock also submitted an objection: "But Subsurface Utility doesn't have an 'e' in it!" To which the AOTM panel of judges can only reply, we don't defend the acronyms, we just bring them to light.



Winner Patt Comstock: Also the record-setter for Number of Entries Submitted.

The AOTM panel wonders whether Jed Clampett had a hand in creating this month's acronym:

SAFETEA-LU

NOTE: Please send your answers to anna.peakstok@metrokc.gov

Global warming

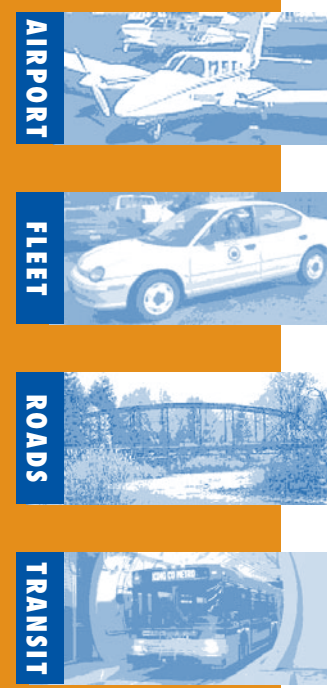
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Mitigation efforts are already well under way in the KCDOT through our use of hybrid electric vehicles, biodiesel fuel, and electric trolleys. We are also working to increase markets for alternative forms of commuting through the InMotion and Commute Trip Reduction programs.

As the third-largest user of diesel fuel in the state (the first two being Burlington Northern Railroad and the Washington State Ferries), King County is in a position to make a noticeable difference in greenhouse-gas consumption. Already, our department is the state's leading purchaser of biodiesel fuels, and one of the prime movers behind the growth of the biofuels industry in Washington.

More information about the Global Warming Action Plan is available on the King County Web site at www.metrokc.gov/exec/news/2007/0207warming.aspx

Top 38 Busiest U.S. Airports for 2006-All Airports		
Source: Federal Aviation Administration, January 2007		
Ranking	Number of Operations	Facility
1	976313	Atlanta
2	958643	Chicago O'Hare
3	702713	Dallas-Fort Worth
4	656842	Los Angeles
5	619474	Las Vegas
6	609522	Denver
7	603246	Houston Intercontinental
8	546510	Phoenix
9	515868	Philadelphia
10	510918	Charlotte
11	482147	Detroit
12	475633	Minneapolis
13	448563	Newark
14	424127	Washington Dulles
15	419488	Salt Lake City
16	415649	Boston
17	406507	Phoenix Deer Valley
18	406211	New York LaGuardia
19	396734	New York JFK
20	394915	Van Nuys
21	387893	Memphis
22	386959	Miami
23	369412	Long Beach
24	362796	Santa Ana
25	359415	San Francisco
26	356012	Orlando
27	345758	Cincinnati
28	340058	Seattle-Sea-Tac
29	336085	Oakland
30	319797	Arapahoe County
31	316858	Orlando Sanford
32	316713	Honolulu
33	307669	Baltimore/Washington
34	303108	Anchorage
35	299793	Seattle-Boeing Field
36	298547	Chicago Midway
37	297237	Ft. Lauderdale
38	282368	Daytona Beach

DOTDISPATCH



KCDOT's Gary Prince, right, was one of several DOT employees who served on the team that helped develop the Climate Plan issued by County Executive Ron Sims, left. The two, both bike commuters, are shown in this photo taken on Bike to Work Day in May 2003.

KCDOT among leaders in county effort to combat global warming

King County Executive Ron Sims calls global warming the defining issue of the 21st century, and his proposed Climate Plan, issued Feb. 7, calls for the region to cut greenhouse gas pollution to 80 percent below current levels by the year 2050.

The plan was created by the Global Warming Action Team, a multidisciplinary team of county staff members under Sims' leadership. Department of Transportation representatives on the team, including Gary Prince, Chris O'Claire, Jim Boon, Windell Mitchell, and Melody Bennett, helped develop comprehensive strategies for the Transit, Fleet, and Roads divisions to use to help the county achieve this ambitious goal.

Prince said the plan includes chapters on the science that demonstrates the reality of global warming, and it also lists steps the county can take to both mitigate and adapt

to the changes that are coming. Because the plan targets carbon dioxide levels from vehicles and dependence on fossil fuels, the Department of Transportation will play a large role.

The report notes that as global warming takes hold, we can expect more violent winter storms, higher summer temperatures, more intense rainfall, and more "rain on snow events." King County can adapt by building a flood-responsive infrastructure in the form of larger culverts and more flood-resistant roads and bridges. Because of a more variable climate and longer summers, construction periods are likely to be longer and more prone to interruption, which will make bid processes more complicated for the county. The KCDOT will also have to develop more sophisticated rapid-response systems to deal with storms like those we were faced with at the end of 2006.

KCDOT goes the extra mile in winter storm response

When winter struck with unusual fury on Thursday, Dec. 14, the KCDOT swung into action. Individuals and teams from the Director's Office and the Roads, Transit, Fleet, and Airport divisions all came forward as part of a coordinated effort to ease the impact on King County residents.

No sooner had the storm begun dumping torrential rains on the county than Roads Maintenance crews were deployed to deal with flooded streets and blocked storm drains. By that evening, calls started coming in about downed trees and power lines. Roads crews were out all over the county closing roads and erecting barriers and flares, dramatically reducing the risk to the traveling public.

By the next morning, hundreds of downed trees were blocking roads throughout the county. Every available Roads Maintenance employee was out in the field, cutting up downed trees with chain saws, getting roads cleared, coordinating with Puget Sound Energy, and fixing malfunctioning traffic signals when

possible. By afternoon, more than 45 roads were closed and trees were still falling. On that Saturday, more than 200 Roads employees were either out on call or in the office lending support. More than 415 calls from the public were fielded between Thursday and Saturday.

Roads staff also assisted the Emergency Coordination Center by putting up signs throughout the county that showed phone numbers people could call for disaster relief.

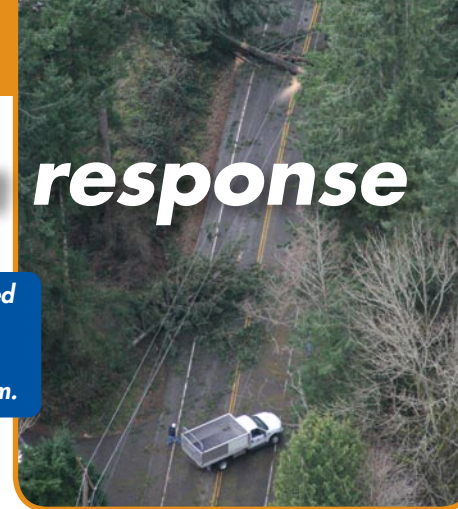
Meanwhile, over at Transit, countywide power outages were putting traffic signals out of commission, wreaking havoc with bus schedules. By 2 a.m. Friday, power to Metro's overhead trolley lines was shut off. Transit deployed diesel buses to continue service on all 16 of those routes. Twelve trolley overhead workers were out working on downed trolley lines from Thursday evening through Saturday. Electricians were also sent out to all Metro bus bases to keep those facilities operational during the power outage, and transit radio system technicians worked 24-hour shifts through Sunday to keep Transit's radio system working. Base staff worked with no heat and limited power all through the weekend, keeping buses dispatched and repaired.

Because of road conditions, buses were constantly being rerouted, and Metro Rider Information staff handled an unprecedented number of calls, keeping passengers apprised of the latest reroute information.

KCDOT was not content merely with keeping roads open, signals working, and buses running. Department employees also rose to the occasion and helped vulnerable residents. Several residents of an Issaquah nursing home that had lost power were taken by Metro employees to a shelter facility in Everett. Metro Access staff also personally contacted all customers who had been "no shows" during the windstorm and over the weekend, to make sure they got all the help they needed. A Metro bus also transported Issaquah residents to a Red Cross shelter at Bellevue High School. And many DOT employees spent personal time volunteering in area shelters.

KCDOT's Fleet Administration Division lent critical aid to other county departments, bringing fuel and emergency generators to facilities throughout the county. Sixteen wastewater generators were kept operational through Fleet fuel deliveries.

Downed trees blocked the Issaquah-Fall City Road after the December wind storm.



Maintenance and operations staff at the King County International Airport (KCIA) ensured before the storm hit that tenants had checked and secured all of their aircraft. Throughout the storm, maintenance and airport police carried out field inspections every 30 minutes. Careful preparation and thorough work during the storm helped keep the airport open without interruption, and airfield lighting remained on, sometimes powered by emergency generators, even when power to the airport went out.

Director's Office staff assisted in the coordination of these efforts, kept the media and public advised about storm damage and recovery efforts, and helped staff the Joint Information Center at the Regional Communications and Emergency Coordination Center (RCECC) in Renton.

All in all, KCDOT employees, working around the clock, dramatically reduced the storm's impact on King County residents' lives and work. "It was a sustained, department-wide effort of which we should all be proud," said DOT Director Harold S. Taniguchi. "We owe a great deal of thanks to all of those who went the extra mile in adverse conditions to help King County weather these storms."

Road services employees load storm debris removed from the roads into trucks to be taken for recycling.



TRANSIT NOW

First Transit Now improvements began in February

Although funds from the new, voter-approved one-tenth of one percent sales tax dedicated to Transit Now improvements will not begin arriving until June, Metro Transit's February service change featured several Transit Now improvements. The following routes received added trips and increased service frequency:

- Route 8** Seattle Center, Capitol Hill
- Route 44** Ballard, Wallingford, University District, Montlake
- Route 101** Downtown Seattle, Renton
- Route 120** Downtown Seattle, White Center, Burien
- Route 140** Burien, Sea-Tac Airport, Renton
- Route 194** Downtown Seattle, Sea-Tac Airport, Federal Way
- Route 234** Kenmore, Kirkland, Bellevue
- Route 245** Kirkland, Crossroads, Factoria
- Route 271** Eastgate, Bellevue, University District

These are the first steps in Metro's use of Transit Now funding to address peak-hour overcrowding and the need for improved service frequency during midday and on weekends. Metro will expand transit service by up to 20 percent over the next 10 years.

DOT delivers 2006 Employee Charitable Campaign a rousing success

Mary Dziejewczynski of the Employee Charitable Campaign reports that the KCDOT raised \$379,516.99 in the 2006 annual fundraising drive. In the picture at left, honorary campaign co-chairs Barbara Miner, director of Department of Judicial Administration, and County Executive Ron Sims present DOT Road Services Project Manager Margo Christiansen with an Above and Beyond Special Recognition Award at the Employee Giving Program Campaign Celebration Breakfast on Jan. 23.

